

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY CARACAS IMMEDIATE

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FOLLOWING REPEAT BOGOTA 8156 ACTION SECSTAT INFO QUITO CALI
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QUOTE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BOGOTA 8156

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SUBJECT: COLOMBIA AND THE DECLARATION OF QUITO

1. SUMMARY. THE COLOMBIAN PRESS HAS PROVIDED CONSIDERABLE
COVERAGE OF THE DECLARATION OF QUITO SIGNED AUGUST 23 BY
PRESIDENTS LOPEZ AND RODRIGUEZ OF COLOMBIA AND ECUADOR RESPECTIVELY.
THE DECLARATION OF QUITO CONTAINED TWO IMPORTANT THRUSTS FOR
COLOMBIA. THE FIRST WAS THE SPECIFIC ISSUE OF LOS AND THE
ASSOCIATED AGREEMENTS BETWEEN COLOMBIA AND ECUADOR
(SEPTTEL). THE SECOND WAS THE REGIONAL ORIENTATION OF THE
DECLARATION, A KEYSTONE OF LOPEZ FOREIGN POLICY, AND BEHIND
THAT, COLOMBIA'S CONTINUING EFFORT TO GRASP THE REINS OF REGIONAL
LEADERSHIP. END SUMMARY

2. ON ONE LEVEL, COLOMBIA HAS PROVEN ITSELF TO BE THE LARGE
BUT GOOD NEIGHBOR TO THE NORTH THROUGH THE DECLARATION. THE
SERIES OF BI-LATERAL AGREEMENTS ON ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND
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COLOMBIA'S WILLINGNESS TO VOICE RECOGNITION OF ITS

SMALLER NEIGHBOR'S 200 MILE TERRITORIAL SEA HELPED TO ESTABLISH COLOMBIA'S CONCERN FOR POSITIVE RELATIONS WITH A SISTER NATION.

3. ON A SECOND LEVEL, THE DECLARATION DEMONSTRATES COLOMBIA'S CHAMPIONING OF THE LATIN AMERICAN CAUSE BY PROFESSING SUPPORT FOR A VARIETY OF REGIONAL ISSUES AND ORGANIZATIONS WHICH ARE DEAR TO THE HEARTS OF A NUMBER OF L.A. NATIONS. STATEMENTS CONDEMNING THE ECONOMIC POLICIES OF DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AND FAVORING L.A. ECONOMIC SOLIDARITY AND DEVELOPMENT SURELY STRUCK THE RIGHT CHORDS FOR MANY L.A. COUNTRIES WANTING TO ESCAPE WHAT THEY SEE AS U.S. DOMINATION. THE NEGATIVE REFERENCE TO THE U.S. TRADE LAW AND ITS EFFECT ON ECUADOR AND VENEZUELA WERE UNMISTAKABLE. A DECLARATION TO THAT EFFECT SIGNED BY COLOMBIA A COUNTRY OFTEN CLOSELY IDENTIFIED WITH THE U.S. NO DOUBT TAKES ON SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE. THE DOCUMENT, THOUGH NOT SEVERE, SAID THE RIGHT THINGS AT THE RIGHT TIME (ON THE EVE OF PRESIDENT LOPEZ STATE VISIT TO THE US) FOR THOSE CONCERNED WITH REGIONAL INDEPENDENCE, PROSPERITY, AND SOLIDARITY.

4. ON A THIRD LEVEL, THE DOCUMENT SIGNED BY THE COLOMBIAN PRESIDENT MAKES THE PROPER GESTURES TOWARD L.A. COUNTRIES WHICH IDENTIFY WITH THE THIRD WORLD TO HELP COLOMBIA ESTABLISH ITS CREDENTIALS AS AN INDEPENDENT ENTITY IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS. THE INSISTENCE ON NO-STRINGS FOOD AID TO "NEEDY" COUNTRIES FROM DEVELOPED ONES AND THE CALL FOR EQUAL PARTICIPATION FOR LDC'S IN THE REFORMATION OF THE WORLD MONETARY SYSTEM MAY HELP TO DISPEL ANY NOTION THAT COLOMBIA WILL NOT REPRESENT THE "JUST" ASPIRATIONS OF THE SMALLER COUNTRIES OF L.A.

5. THE VISIT TO QUITO AND THE RESULTING DECLARATION WERE CLEARLY NOT A SIMPLE EXERCISE IN NEIGHBORLINESS. THE INITIATIVE APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN ANOTHER IN A SERIES OF MOVES BY THE COLOMBIAN PRESIDENT TO NOT ONLY PROMOTE A L.A. REGIONAL ORIENTATION BUT TO TAKE A LEADING ROLE. COLOMBIA MAY NOT POSSESS THE VENEZUELAN KIND OF ECONOMIC POWER TO "BUY" LEADERSHIP IN LATIN AMERICA BUT IT DOES HAVE THE HIGHLY RESPECTED REPUTATION AS A WORKING DEMOCRACY AND A REASONABLE MODERATOR AND IT HAS A PRESIDENT WHO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SEEMS INTENT ON TAKING THE NECESSARY INITIATIVE TO PLACE COLOMBIA IN THE LATIN AMERICAN, OR AT LEAST THE ANDEAN, DRIVER'S SEAT.
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